September 2023

TPOM TRANSITIONS

A Special Briefing for friends of Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry

A Battle for Bodies, Minds, and Souls

In 2021, the United States reached a startling milestone. This was the first year that over 100,000 Americans died of a drug overdose, with the vast majority of cases involving pure fentanyl or a mixture of fentanyl and other drugs. In 2022, accidental deaths by overdose continued to surge with over 107,000 deaths. The 2002 record is on pace to be shattered in 2023 with no end in sight to this scourge on our nation. This deadly synthetic drug is mostly made in labs in China and smuggled through the drug cartels in Mexico to Americans who are abusing these drugs at an alarming rate.

While it is easy to assign blame for this epidemic to the manufacturers and distributors, there is no doubt that our nation's continual desire for mind-altering substances is at the heart of the problem. There will always be someone who will supply what someone craves.

2022 Benefit Dinner

For those in our criminal justice system, the use, selling, manufacturing, and theft to support drug use is the number one reason why so many are incarcerated in this country. In a world full of trauma and pain, is it really that surprising that so many try to find anything that will dull the hurt?

I know that at TPOM, at the end of the day, despite all of our programs in the prisons and those who grace our doors at our reentry center, we are only serving a small percentage of Americans who have lost so much due to addiction. Yet, for everyone who surrenders their life to God and seeks meaning and purpose in their life, that change has a ripple effect in their homes and our communities.

At the end of the day, we cannot change the entire world but we can have a positive impact on those in our circle of influence. Those in our county jails, in our local prisons, in our rehabilitation centers, and living in our streets, are within our circle at TPOM.

Thank you for your support and volunteer efforts for TPOM as we are on the frontlines of this battle for our bodies, minds, and souls.

Sincerely,

Thomas Snow
Director, TPOM

2023 BENEFIT DINNER: AN EVENING TO DREAM

This year, TPOM supporters, residents, program alumni, and community partners will gather on October 5, 6:30 p.m., at The Fairgrounds Nashville Exposition Center for *An Evening to Dream*. We will enjoy a catered meal, outstanding entertainment from a renowned artist and mistress of ceremonies, and cast the dream for the future of TPOM.

Kimberly "Brownie" Vaughn, mistress of ceremonies, delivers power-packed messages and solutions to transform lives wherever she goes. She has participated in events such as the Tim Tebow Foundation and a Big XII Leadership Conference. Her latest book, *Confidence B4 Commitment*, debuted as a #1 New Release on Amazon. She will add much to the activities of the evening.

Our special guest artist for the evening is **Mr. Talkbox (Byron Chambers)**. He is the world's top Talkbox Artist and voice to the Intro of multi-Grammy Award-winning song *24K Magic* by Bruno Mars. As a solo artist, he's had five #1 Singles in Japan, a 2016 Grammy Award Nomination & is a two-time Dove Award winner. Mr. Talkbox is featured on the gospel smash hit, *My God*, by Cece Winans' Nashville Life Music which peaked at #5 on the Gospel Top *100 Billboard charts.* He is also featured on the gospel classic, *Jesus Is The Best Thing*, by Martha Munizzi, and many others. An *Evening to DREAM* promises to be a memorable experience. **Register at tpom.org/events.**

TPOM GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

GRADY MORRIS

Grady Morris *is a recent graduate from TPOM Transitional. He reflected on the difference that TPOM has made in his life.*

Describe how you heard about TPOM. I worked in the reentry department at Turney Center, so I handled all the materials and applications as guys were applying to the various reentry programs. TPOM looked like a good choice.

Did you have any concerns when you got here? I had a little anxiety about the process, but I had spoken with David and Cynthia when they came to Riverbend and I knew what to expect.

How did work go for you as you got started? I worked at Slim & Husky's for 30-40 days and then took a culinary class and worked at my cousin's restaurant. But my father and brother were barbers and now I'm working at Great Clips cutting hair.

How did TPOM help while you were in the program? TPOM helped me to understand I had to acclimate to a whole new environment. The counseling sessions were the most helpful thing. I came to understand that to be successful I had to be focused on myself and to say no to some of the things that others were asking me to do. Healing had to happen in my own life before I started trying to take care of everybody else.

What advice do you have for others who might be thinking about reentry? I hope people will strongly consider coming to TPOM. Take advantage of all the resources there, use your networking opportunities, and pursue the possibilities that you discover. I would tell people in the program to SAVE MONEY and avoid the temptation to spend it all as you make it. You're going to need it. TPOM is a great place to start.

Scan the QR Code (right) to donate or you may contact Thomas Snow at tsnow@tpom.org or 615-668-8281 for more information.

Listen for TPOM ads on
94.1 FM, The FISH

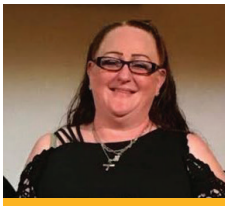
CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Congratulations to our recent graduates. Many resources are available in the program here, but successful graduates must put in a lot of hard work and make wise choices during the 4-5 months they are making their way to graduation. We pray for their continued progress as they build a new life. Thank you to the volunteers, donors, churches, and staff who supported these graduates every step of their journey.

Alicia Williams

Randall Edwards

Elizabeth Cureton


Tina Hargrove

Ashton Busch

Robert Forbes

Tiffany Reed

Pebbles Garner

Tiffany Witherspoon

UPCOMING EVENTS

Register for all events at **tpom.org/events.**

TPOM Basic Volunteer Training
Saturday, September 30, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., TPOM Reentry Center, 136 Rains Ave. This will be the next required training for all new volunteers. This four-hour training will provide you with a wealth of information on working with our population and will describe all the opportunities to volunteer. Go to our website to register.

TPOM Benefit Dinner: An Evening to DREAM
Thursday, October 5, 6:30 p.m., Exposition Center, The Fairgrounds Nashville If you have not yet registered for the Dinner, go to tpom.org/events today and register to be part of an inspirational evening.

UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

TPOM NEWS

THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

C. Terry Deaton gave a gift in honor of **Kay Gibson** to the Youth Program.

Lisa Allen made a donation in honor of **Dauflin** to the Women's Program.

THRIVE Youth Event

Friday-Saturday, October 20-21, 6 p.m.-10 a.m., TPOM Reentry Center, 136 Rains Ave. We were created to do more than just survive, but to thrive! (Jeremiah 29:11) This overnight event is designed for youth (ages 8-17) in families touched by incarceration. Activities will include speakers, movies, food, games, music, and more. Volunteers are invited to help with this event as we serve these young people. Encourage youth in this target group to register online.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@tnprison

@TPOM - Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry

@tpomreentrycenter

@reentrytpom

TPOM RESIDENT SPOTLIGHT

MELISSA LOPEZ

Melissa Lopez *is preparing for graduation shortly. She talks about her experiences at TPOM and her plans after graduation.*

How did you find TPOM? I came to a seminar at my facility and heard Thomas describe the program here. At first, I wanted to return to Knoxville but doors closed in that direction and when I got here, TPOM was great.

What were some of your concerns when you arrived? I was concerned about having no family here. But I talk to my children every day, my family comes to visit, and my daughter even came down from Michigan to see me.

How has TPOM been helpful with your reentry? From the moment I arrived, the staff poured out so much love on me. Ashley was always asking if I needed anything. I got great attention and much encouragement and they got me going in the right direction. But what I like is that they don't baby us; they help us learn how to be independent again after being in prison where everything is done for us.

How has your work experience been? I got a great job at a heating and cooling company as a dispatcher. I have some IT training and I've been designing and building a website for them. I've been working on a degree from Chattanooga State in Business Administration and I've been able to apply what I've learned to keep track of clients and do some bookkeeping for them. It's been a great place to work.

What do people need to understand about incarceration? I want them to understand that incarceration is not an easy journey, especially the separation from family. We still need to be treated like human beings. I would ask them not to be too judgmental because they may not know the circumstances that led to incarceration. Know that many incarcerated people want to change. I know many women who have been successful after they were released.

What goals do you have for the future? I am focused on getting a place and a car and finishing my education. I'd love to get a job in my chosen field in IT after I get the certificates for that. But I'm taking it a day at a time. I'm so grateful for a second chance and to be able to start over in the right way.

What advice would you give to people considering the program at TPOM? Make sure you want to succeed or reentry will never work. Follow the rules and you can be successful. Keep Jesus Christ first because without him, you can do nothing.

TPOM®

TENNESSEE PRISON
OUTREACH MINISTRY

136 Rains Avenue • Nashville, TN 37203

BOARD MEMBERS

Randi Baxter, *President*
Sam Daniel
Greg Hardeman
James Kelley
Jeff Castle
Steve Church
Walt Leaver
Suzie Smith
Kimberly McCall
Cindy Story
Mark Parkey
Eric Qualls

ADVISORY BOARD

John Baxter
Eric Beard
Zachary Hendrixson
Cary McClure
Robert McMurry
William Murphy
Angela Rios
Tina Smith
Anna Stewart
Justin Stinus
Adrianne Thompson

STAFF MEMBERS

Thomas Snow, *Executive Director*
Dr. Cynthia Stewart, *Director of Operations*
David Phipps, *Spiritual Development Director*
Alice Clark, *Recovery Coordinator*
Tommy Gore, *Development and Outreach Manager*
Randy Halstead, *Director of Clinical Counseling*
Fred Lopez, *Re-Entry Specialist*
Michelle Kevorkian, *Volunteer Coordinator*
Valerie Reed, *House Shepherd*
Jason Roberts, *House Shepherd*
Ronald Gordon, *House Shepherd*
Catherine Elder, *House Shepherd*
Oliver Cobb, *House Shepherd (Memphis)*
Larry Chamberlain, *House Shepherd (Memphis)*
Reisha Kidd, *Community Engagement*
Pam Walls, *Accounting Manager*
Ashley Landes, *Case Manager*
Diane Nelson, *Admissions Manager*